

The rights, duties and responsibilities of national/local
education providers and parents with regard to providing
education

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The rights, duties and responsibilities of national / local education providers and parents with regard to providing education (Belgium)

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Education authorities

Formal Structure

* Compulsory education till 18 (full time: till 16). Education is free till that age.

* Freedom of education (art. 17 of the Belgian Constitution):

- Schools can be established independent of the government.
- For officially recognized certificates and subsidies, statutory and prescribed regulations have to be followed.

* Autonomy of school networks:

Three types of organizing authorities:

- + ARGO: community schools
- + Cities & Provinces: official subsidized schools
- + Private person/organisation: free subsidized schools

The three networks are free in their choice of pedagogical methods, curriculum and time table.

Individual initiatives

Parents

Formal Structure

- * Parents are obliged to send their children to school till they are 18.
- * Parents are free to choose the school for their child (art. 17 of the Belgian Constitution).

Individual initiatives

- * Parents may establish a school e.g. 'method' schools

Parental involvement in the education of children with Special Educational Needs

Formal Structure

Individual initiatives by education authorities / schools

The involvement of parents in school self-evaluation and inspection

Formal Structure

Individual initiatives by education authorities / schools

The role of parents in schools, including in classrooms

Formal Structure

1. School policy

*** Community schools:**

local school council

- + 4 members elected by the parents
- + 4 members of local economic, social and cultural organisations appointed by the parents representatives
- + 3 co-opted representatives of the pedagogical council
- + (one of) the head(s) as governor
- + one of the non-staff members is chairperson

Real decision-making power

*** Subsidized schools:**

participation council

- + the organising authority (at least 2)
- + the staff (at least 2)
- + the parents (at least 2)
- + co-opted representatives of the local community(at least 2)
- + chaired by the head

Right to advise and to be informed

2. Parents' association

* Composition:

All parents can be member

* Aims:

- + systematically inform parents/offer education
- + 'try' to influence the decision-making process in the school
- + set up projects together with the school
- + promote the contacts and relations in the school

Individual initiatives by education authorities / schools

1. Learning process

Only in primary schools:

* At class level:

Mothers helping reading, hand work, paper work, ...

* At school level:

Parents collaborating with the school on a project.

2. Extra-curricular activities:

Only in primary schools:

e.g. guidance of pupils on excursions and swimming trips,
school crossing patrol, fix things up in school, set up a
library or documentation centre in the school,

School / Home Links

Formal Structure

Individual initiatives by education authorities / schools

- * School newspaper
- * Information meeting (e.g. on a school trip)
- * School party, sport meeting, ...
- * Open day

Assessment and reporting to parents on pupils' achievement

Formal structure

- * School report
- * Parents' evening

Individual initiatives by education authorities / schools

- * Individual contacts between parents and teachers
- * Letters for parents or notes for parents in the pupils agenda